



Martin Shaw
RGBB Chairman

FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Member,

This being the first RGBB News for 2004 I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a prosperous and safe New Year.

It also gives me great pleasure on behalf of the RGBB to congratulate Mr. Paul Dugan on the award of his OBE. Paul is thoroughly deserving of this public honour for all the efforts he has unselfishly provided to the expatriate community here in Riyadh in terms of education and recreation. Paul & I worked together on the Dirab Fun Day in March 2002, his huge reserves of energy and drive were an inspiration to everyone on the organising committee. The event was and remains without precedent in Riyadh and without Paul's unflinching support we could not have pulled off this great day.

The New Year never really got out of the blocks when we had to take a break for the Eid Al Adha holiday. But by the time the Newsletter reaches you I am sure that you will have all built up a good head of steam and are at least attempting to get the buzz back into your business and family life.

From a 2003 high of 265 our membership currently stands at 217, but there are some serious efforts being brought about by Ian Crawford to claw back the numbers. Ian is developing glossy A4 handouts to promote new membership. I know this may sound a little odd to those who have fully embraced the electronic age but we don't all carry our Lap Tops around with us and then not connected to the printer! Sometimes there is no substitute for the paper. These handouts proved a real success in building the membership the last time they were tried a couple of years ago. Again, this time they will be supported by A3 Posters that it is hoped will be displayed on the notice boards in all the major compounds. The Poster will be attractive & colourful and will indicate who the compound RGBB contact person is in order that potential members can personally meet up with their rep and have an informal chat about how we operate.

Further into this month's copy of the Newsletter you will see the events diary for this year. There you will find comprehensive listings of the Briefing dates at the Embassy along with all the other social events throughout the year that have been organised so far. We have also identified the British School holiday dates and the Eid Holidays to assist you in your planning process. I hope that you find the events diary exciting and would only add that it is there for your benefit, constructive comments therefore are always welcome.

Two final points I would like to touch upon, one is the upcoming AGM and the other is about our membership generation initiative. In accordance with the constitution we have declared this years AGM to be on Saturday 6th March 2004 at Venue 1. We plan to cover off any briefing items at the front end and then go quickly into the main issue being the AGM. Gordon Bennie will present the 2003 accounts for your consideration and hopefully approval and then the current board will stand down. We will then commence the voting, but it is important that you understand how this process works as it can be confusing.

The Chairman's role is identified as a specific position open to any fully paid up member.

The Deputy Chairman's role is also identified as a specific position open to any fully paid up member.

The remaining five Board positions are not specifically identified by working title but are decided between those members finally elected on to the Board.

Therefore, it could be possible for you to see the same name appear on each ballot paper for all of the following positions:

Chairman, Deputy Chairman, General Board Member

The Ballot papers will be distributed on arrival and will show the names of the members who have put themselves forward for each position.

The voting process will be by CLOSED BALLOT and the Chief Returning Officer normally the British Embassy Ex Officio – Mr. Barry Lowen or his nominated deputy will collect in all correctly completed ballot papers. He will count the ballot papers and then only announce the successful candidate.

The result of the vote for Chairman will be announced before voting for the Deputy Chairman. The voting for the Deputy Chairman will be announced before the general vote for Board members with successful candidates for the first and second positions being eliminated from the subsequent papers.

Finally, a word on membership, notwithstanding the comments made above regarding the current initiatives underway, I cannot stress strongly enough what a vital role we all play individually to boost the membership role. The burden of growing the membership is not and must not be on one person's shoulders, we must all play our part to encourage new members from our work place, our neighbours, friends and acquaintances. In this regard I wish you all Good Luck.

With Warm Regards
Martin Shaw